ENERGY STAR®
SALES GUIDE FOR BOTTLED WATER COOLERS

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Frequently Asked Questions

- What is a bottled water cooler? A bottled water cooler is a free-standing device that dispenses water from removable 4- to 5-gallon plastic bottles commonly positioned on top of the unit. There are two types of bottled water coolers: (1) cold only units, which dispense only cold water or both cold and room-temperature water (known as "cook and cold"); and (2) hot and cold units, which dispense both hot and cold water.

- How are energy efficiency levels defined? Energy efficiency levels are defined in terms of kilowatt (kWh)-hours consumed per day. ENERGY STAR® labeled water coolers waste little energy when they are not heating or cooling water. About 60 percent of the energy consumed by standard cold only units and 90 percent of the energy consumed by standard hot and cold units is consumed while these units are in standby mode. Fewer kilowatts consumed means better energy performance.

- How do water coolers qualify for the ENERGY STAR label? Bottled water coolers must have the following characteristics in standby operation:

Product Category	Energy Use
Cold Only and Cook and Cold Bottled Units	≤ 0.16 kW-hours/day
Hot and Cold	≤ 1.20 kW-hours/day

- How much energy could be saved? Energy savings of roughly 60–70 percent could be gained by fitting units with ***insulation*** or a ***timer***, which would cut the power to the cooling and heating units during periods of low demand. The value of installing an ENERGY STAR labeled water cooler can be as much as $47 per unit per year in lower utility bills. The pollution prevention potential of having all bottled water coolers meet ENERGY STAR specifications is on the order of one-half million metric tons of carbon.

FAST FACTS: BOTTLED WATER COOLERS

- Water coolers consume 4 billion kWh/year, producing annual pollution roughly equivalent to the emissions of over 700,000 cars.
- Annually, Americans spend $300 million on utility bills to operate water coolers.
- Energy savings of roughly 60–70 percent could be gained by fitting units with insulation or a timer.
- Annual energy savings from an ENERGY STAR labeled water cooler could be as much as ***$47 per unit***. If half of all water coolers sold in 2010 are ENERGY STAR labeled units, annual pollution prevention potential is on the order of one-half million metric tons of carbon.
- Because only four manufacturers dominate the market, only one may need to label its products before the rest follow suit.

- Who tests for the label? Water cooler manufacturers determine the performance of their own products and then inform ENERGY STAR which products comply with the specification.

- Who benefits from energy savings? Bottled-water vendors sell or, more commonly, rent water coolers to businesses and an increasing number of households. Energy savings are likely to accrue to ***building owners***, whose utility bills go down, rather than to businesses. Homeowners will also benefit from energy cost savings.

- What factors drive market growth? Changing consumption patterns will likely drive market growth. Concerns about tap water quality have historically resulted in greater sales of bottled water, yielding increased demand for bottled water coolers. The split between building owners and users of bottled water coolers poses a special challenge to marketing qualified products.

Figure 1. Bottled Water Cooler
Source: The Cadmus Group, Inc.

ENERGY STAR labeled water coolers are a better value for customers.

- ENERGY STAR labeled water coolers use less energy than standard models, which helps home and building owners lower their annual energy bills.

ENERGY STAR labeled water coolers are better for the environment.

- Because ENERGY STAR labeled water coolers use less energy, they reduce the pollution related to energy production.

Why label water coolers?

- ENERGY STAR is the trusted symbol that makes it easy for purchasers to identify products with the best energy performance.

- As more companies purchase water coolers because of tap water fears, there is a greater need to curb the pollution caused by increased energy use.

LARGEST WATER COOLER MANUFACTURERS	
Manufacturer	**Has ENERGY-STAR-compliant model?**
Elkay	TBD
Sunroc	TBD
Crystal Mountain	Y
OASIS	TBD

- Because only four manufacturers dominate the market, only one may need to enter into a labeling program before the rest follow suit in order to remain competitive.